

IN THE CLAIMS

1-10 (Canceled)

11. (New) A method of communications between first and second computers having an open instant messaging (IM) connection, the first and second computers running respective IM application programs providing an IM window at each computer for displaying an exchange of text messages, the method comprising operations of:

the IM application programs cooperatively replicating contents and format of a clipboard provided by an operating system running at the first computer in a clipboard provided by an operating system running at the second computer.

12. The method of claim 11, where the replicating operations comprise:

- responsive to the first computer receiving a predetermined user input sequence including invocation of a predetermined paste command of the operating system running at the first computer, where the predetermined user input sequence is performed in conjunction with the IM window at the first computer, the IM application program running on the first computer performing operations including uploading contents and format of the clipboard of the operating system running at the first computer;
- responsive to the IM application program running on the first computer receiving user entry of a send command, the IM application program running on the first computer transferring said uploaded contents and format to the second computer;
- responsive to receiving the transferred contents and format, the IM application program running on the second computer presenting a user prompt in conjunction with the IM window of the second computer;

the IM application program running on the second computer, responsive to user selection of the user prompt, copying the transferred contents and format to the clipboard of the operating system running at the second computer.

13. The method of claim 11, where the replicating operations comprise:
responsive to the first computer receiving a predetermined user input sequence including invocation of a predetermined paste command of the operating system running at the first computer, where the user input sequence is performed in conjunction with the IM window at the first computer, the IM program running on the first computer presenting an acknowledgement message in conjunction with the IM window of the first computer;
responsive to the IM application program running on the first computer receiving user entry of a send command, performing operations comprising:
the IM application program running on the first computer uploading contents and format of the clipboard of the operating system running at the first computer, and transferring said uploaded contents and format to the second computer;
the IM application program running on the second computer presenting a user prompt in conjunction with the IM window of the second computer;
the IM application program running on the second computer, responsive to receiving user selection of the user prompt, copying the transferred contents and format to the clipboard of operating system running at the second computer.

14. The method of claim 11, where the transmitting and replicating operations comprise:

responsive to the IM application program running on the first computer receiving user entry of a send command, performing operations comprising:

the IM application program running on the first computer sending notice of the paste to the IM application program running on the second computer;

the IM application program running on the second computer presenting a user prompt in conjunction with the IM window of the second computer;

responsive to receiving user selection of the user prompt, performing operations comprising:

the IM application program running on the first computer uploading contents and format of the clipboard of the operating system running at the first computer, and transferring said uploaded contents and format to the second computer;

the IM application program running on the second computer copying the transferred contents and format to the clipboard of the operating system running at the second computer.

15. The method of claim 11, where the replicating operation comprises responsive to the first computer receiving a predetermined user input sequence including invocation of a predetermined paste command of the operating system running at the first computer, where the predetermined user input sequence is performed in conjunction with the IM window at the first computer, the IM application program running on the first computer performing at least one of:

uploading contents and format of the clipboard of the operating system running at the first computer;

uploading contents and format of the clipboard of the operating system running at the first computer and transferring the uploaded contents and format to the second computer;

sending notice of the paste to the IM application program running on the second computer.

16. The method of claim 11, where:
the operations further comprise, before completion of said replicating operation, the IM program at the second computer presenting a user prompt in conjunction with the IM window of the second computer;
completion of the replicating operation is conditioned on the IM application program running on the second computer receiving user selection of the user prompt.
17. The method of claim 16, the user prompt comprising a hyperlink.
18. The method of claim 16,
the clipboard of the operating system running at the first computer having been populated by a document fragment from a given source application program;
the user prompt further including identification of the given source application program.
19. The method of claim 16,
the clipboard of the operating system running at the first computer having been populated by differently formatted versions of a document fragment from a source application program;
the replicating operation placing the differently formatted versions of the document fragment into the clipboard of the operating system of the second computer, reserving choice as between the versions to any application programs running on the second computer receiving a predetermined user input sequence including invocation of a

predetermined paste command of the operating system running at the second computer.

20. A process of communications between first and second computers having an open text messaging link, the computers running respective text messaging application programs providing a text messaging window at each computer for displaying an exchange of text messages, the process comprising operations of:

replicating contents and format of a first computer's operating system clipboard in an operating system clipboard of a second computer, where the replicating operation is conducted responsive to coordinated user instructions submitted via respective text messaging application programs of the first and second computers.

21. Computer-readable media containing a first program for installing a second program, the second program when installed on multiple target computers performing operations for communications between first and second computers having an open instant messaging (IM) connection, the first and second computers running respective IM application programs providing an IM window at each computer for displaying an exchange of text messages, the operations comprising:

the IM application programs cooperatively replicating contents and format of a clipboard provided by an operating system running at the first computer in a clipboard provided by an operating system running at the second computer.

22. Computer-readable media containing a first program for installing a second program, the second program when installed on multiple target computers performing operations for communications between first and second computers having an open IM link, the computers running respective IM application programs providing an IM window at each computer for displaying an exchange of text messages, the operations comprising:

replicating contents and format of a first computer's operating system clipboard in an operating system clipboard of a second computer, where the replicating operation is conducted responsive to coordinated user instructions submitted at each of the computers via interfaces provided by windows of respective IM application programs.